

ABOUT NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH DAY...



The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health sets aside the third Thursday of every November – November 15, 2018 – to celebrate National Rural Health Day. First and foremost, National Rural Health Day is an opportunity to “Celebrate the Power of Rural” by honoring the selfless, community-minded, “can do” spirit that prevails in rural America. But it also gives us a chance to bring to light the unique healthcare challenges that rural citizens face – and showcase the efforts of rural healthcare providers, State Offices of Rural Health and other rural stakeholders to address those challenges.



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY HEALTH HERO AWARD...

The Community Health Hero Award – given in honor of National Rural Health Day – recognizes North Country residents who have demonstrated outstanding public service and a commitment to improving the health and wellness of their community. Nominations are accepted from the community at large and winners are selected by members of the North Country Health Compass Partners. One hero is selected from each of Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties.

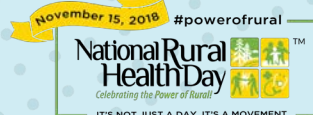
IN HONOR OF NOVEMBER 15 AS NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH DAY, THE FORT DRUM REGIONAL HEALTH PLANNING ORGANIZATION AND NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH COMPASS PARTNERS ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME YOU TO THE FIRST ANNUAL...

# COMMUNITY HEALTH HERO LUNCHEON

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2018

11:30 A.M.  
– 2:00 P.M.

1000 ISLANDS HARBOR HOTEL  
CLAYTON, NY



# TODAY'S AGENDA:

11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.  
— REGISTRATION  
& LUNCH

12:30 - 1:00 P.M.  
— GUEST SPEAKER:  
ROMAN ESPINOZA

1:00 - 2:00 P.M.  
— AWARD CEREMONY  
PAT FONTANA,  
FDRHPO

WELCOME TO THE 1000 ISLANDS HARBOR HOTEL...



**KAPOW!**

# OUR HEROES:

## PAKKAM RAJASEKARAN, M.D.,

is Medical Director and Chief of Psychiatry at Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center in Ogdensburg, NY. He was born in Madras, India, where he earned his M.D. at Madras Medical College in 1976. He then moved to the United States and trained at two downstate hospitals, Maimonides Medical Center and Brookdale Medical Center. Dr. Rajasekaran has been a practicing psychiatrist for 37 years. He is a widower, surviving his late wife, Mary Adair. He has one daughter, Nisha, and four stepchildren: Chad, Dawn, Michelle, and Danne. Dr. Rajasekaran was nominated for the Community Health Hero Award by his colleague Kimberly McKnight.



# ABOUT OUR GUEST SPEAKER:



**ROMAN R. ESPINOZA** is the founder of the "Blessing Box" movement in Northern New York. After first seeing the idea in a news story out of Texas, he recognized a need in our community and began constructing his own Blessing Boxes – which contain food and other essentials – to place in his lawn and his neighbors' lawns. Today, 29 Blessing Boxes exist in the North Country.

A native of Kansas City, Kansas, Roman was one of 12 children — 10 brothers and one sister. He enlisted in the U.S. Army on December 27, 1990, and served most of his 25-year career right here at Fort Drum. He has been stationed in and deployed to several areas across the U.S. and around the world. Along with service ribbons, expeditionary and campaign medals, Roman was also awarded three Bronze Stars, one of which included the "V" device for Valor.

Roman is a full-time student at Jefferson Community College (JCC), where he majors in Chemical Dependency and Human Services. Roman and his wife, Mary, have been together for more than 25 years. They have one daughter, Alexandra, and one grandson, William.



**MICHELLE GRAHAM** is Senior Director of Health & Wellness at the Watertown Family YMCA. She is a Watertown native who decided to stay in the area because she believes it "is a wonderful place to raise a family." Michelle earned her M.S. in Exercise Physiology from Syracuse University and previously worked at the CANI Fitness Center before joining the YMCA. She is married to Jay Graham and has three children: Maxwell, McKenna, and Lucia. Michelle was nominated for the Community Health Hero Award by YMCA Executive Director Denise Young.

**KIMBERLY CAVANAGH** is a Mental Health Peer Advocate at the Northern Regional Center for Independent Living (NRCIL) in Lewis County. She grew up in Amberg, Wisconsin, and moved to the North Country, earning her A.A.S. at SUNY Jefferson. She has held various roles in the community, including Peer Specialist at the Lewis County Community Health Center and Domestic Violence Advocate at Lewis County Opportunities. She and her life partner, William Draper, have three children: Joel, Mandy, and Sunsetta. Kimberly was nominated for the Community Health Hero Award by colleagues Karen Boliver and Maureen Cean.

**BAM!**

